THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (d) The representations recived from the workmen of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. have been referred to the EPF Organisation. The matter is under examination and final decision on these will be taken on merit and in accordance with relevant rules.

Utilisation of unclaimed porvident fund amount

1791. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any data of the amount deposited in provident fund in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what has been the ratio of unclaimed amount in this fund;

(d) whether Government have any plans to use this unclaimed provident fund amount for different welfare schemes in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As on 31.3.1996 the progressive total amount deposited in the Employees' Provident Funds was Rs. 50704.16 crore.

(c) Total amount lying in the unclaimed deposit account as on 31.3.1996 was Rs. 72.53 crores.

(d) to (e) The provident fund money belongs to the subscribers. It is, therefore, required to be paid to the individual subscriber/nominee as per provisions of the scheme as and when claim in this regard is received in the Employees' Provident Fund Office.

Policy to prevent of regularise child labour

1792. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRPUPAM:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any policy to prevent or regularise the child labour in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the policy and the response of all the NGOs functioning in the country in this regard; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there is no consensus among the people working in the field of child labour, as far as the policy is concerned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the present Government seeks complete elimination of child labour. Government have initiated number of steps for progressive elimination of child labour. Under the Child Labour prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, the employment of children is prohibited in 7 occupations and 18 processes. The working conditions of children in all other employments are regulated under the Act. There are also legal provisions in other labour laws safeguarding the interests of working children. Government have also taken up a programme for rehabilitation of child labour withdrawn from hazardous occupations through special schools in which NGOs are also being closely associated. Government is not aware of any major disagreement with the overall policy and approach of the Government on child labour.

Competition From Child Labour in The Beedi Sector

1793. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been evolved to protect workers in the beedi

sector facing competition from child labour in the sector;

(b) whether discussions have been held with State Governments to detect and stop enrolment of child labour;

(c) if so, the details of such discussions;

(d) whether funds would be given to non-governmental agencies to reduce involvement of child labour in this sectors; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Employment of children, below the age of 14 years is prohibited in beedi industrial premises under the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1996 as also under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

(b) and (c) Govrnment have been discussing the issue of child labour and their rehabilitation with the State Governments in various formus, from time to time. Recently, a conference of the State Labour Minsters was held on 7-8the July, 1997 to review the progress in the implementation of the directives of the Supreme Court on child labour. The review revealed that the first phase of the survey on child labour in most of the States/ UTs had been completed and action has been initiated to give effect to the directions of the Supreme Court.

(d) and (e) Under the existing National Child Project Scheme, the Central Government is fully funding child labour projects at district level. The Special Schools run under the project, for the rehabilitation of Children Withdrawn from hazardous occupations including beedi sector, are in many cases managed by NGOs. NGOs are also eligible to get financial assistance under the Grant in Aid Scheme and also under the IPEC project of the ILO.

Payment of Wages and retirement benefits to employes of PSUs

1794. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the details concerning the failure of Government to meet its contractual obligation with respect to payment of wages and retirement benefits to employees of public sector undertaking;

(b) the reasons for Government's failure to meet its legal liabilities; and

(c) whether Government have been served with any notice of civil or criminal proceedings for their failure in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STAE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABNOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Due to cash losses many of the public sector undertakings are not in a position to pay the wages and other statutory dues to their employees. Ministry of Labour has already taken up the mater with concerned Ministries as well as Ministry of Finance so that the funds are made available in time for payment of salary and other statutory dues to the workers of sick PSUs.

(c) No, Sir.

Abolition of Ceiling Limit on Bonus

1795. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to increase the minimum bonus by abolishing the ceiling limit and amending the Payment of Bonus Act; and

(b) if os, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINSTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.